Potomac Community Resources

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Championing Innovative Programs for the Developmentally Disabled Community since 1994

Sometimes a small step taken to address a specific need develops into a much wider resource to benefit an entire community. Thus began the story of Potomac Community Resources, (PCR), a unique organization that assists individuals with developmental differences and their families.

PCR was started in 1994 by Joan and Jim Sullivan of Potomac and Monsignor John Enzler, then the Pastor of Our Lady of Mercy Church, as well as other families of the parish that included loved ones with developmental differences. Stephen F. Riley is the Executive Director of Potomac Community Resources, co-founder of the 501(c)(3) nonprofit, and parent of a PCR member. He talks about how the organization began: “Our experience living with our family members and seeing firsthand their immediate needs is what guided us through our journey.”

During non-COVID times, PCR offers a wide-range of therapeutic, recreational, social, and respite care programs. These include music, fitness and movement, respite care for individuals with significant and moderate care needs, discussion groups for men and women, communication skills, basketball, art, a social club, photography, information sessions for parents of transitioning youth, and many special events throughout the year.

All programs are led by caring professionals in their field: experienced music, art, and speech therapists, certified fitness trainers, and clinical social workers, all of whom specialize in working with people with developmental differences. They are assisted by PCR’s staff and dedicated volunteers.

With the onset of the Coronavirus pandemic and the need to suspend in-person programs for health and safety reasons, PCR immediately pivoted its focus by providing virtual program offerings to include 20 online programs via Zoom and 100 program videos that are archived on www.pcr-inc.org. Their monthly “Transition Times” info sessions, offered via Zoom webinars, provide much-needed information and access to community resources, such as applying for Social Security SSI/SSDI, and more.

PCR, in partnership with the Maryland Developmental Disabilities Administration (DDA), has also created, produced, and distributed a new, five-part video series on what the DDA is, the various services and supports it offers, and how to access those services and resources. These videos include ASL interpretation to make them accessible for persons who are deaf, and also include Spanish language interpretation.

Potomac Community Resources recognizes the benefit of working with other organizations for the good of its members and collaborates with the Montgomery County government and more than two dozen nonprofits, religious organizations, schools, civic organizations and clubs in the community.

PCR does not own or lease office or program space, operating programs at sites made available through collaborations with other nonprofits. They employ only four full-time staff, which is supplemented with contracted professionals and hourly direct-care staff and a cadre of dedicated volunteers. Its program excellence, operational efficiency (89.2% of revenues go directly to programs), and good governance practices have been widely recognized, including six-time recognition by the Catalogue for Philanthropy as “one of the best small charities in Greater Washington.”

More compelling than these awards, however, is the impact PCR makes in the lives of its 500 plus members by helping participants achieve goals relating to independence, self-care abilities, fine and gross motor skills, communication skills, positive social interactions, self-awareness and esteem. As one parent wrote, “My son loves all of the PCR classes he is taking and has taken over the years. They have especially meant a lot to us during this pandemic. Thank you for the classes online, thank you for all you and PCR do!”

To learn more about PCR and its many offerings to support individuals and their families who have development disabilities go to their website: https://www.pcr-inc.org.